(b) whether Government have conducetd any study to find out the reasons for which Coal India has been incurring losses; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what other measures are being taken to make the undertaking earn profit ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) The price of coal has been revised w.e.f. 28-12-1991 to recoup the increase in cost of production.

(b) Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices has recently started a comprehensive study of Coal Industry with a view to recommend suitable prices and other policy measures for the industry.

(c) Steps being taken to reduce the costs in Coal India Limited include :—

(i) Improved manpower planning including redeployment of surplus workers and restricting the intake of new employees against vacancies caused by natural wastage.

(ii) Control on increase in manpower through voluntary retirement schemes.

(iii) The concept of 'all men—all jobs' is being tried on an experimental basis.

(iv) Improvement in the availability and utilisation of equipment by providing adequate workshop support, improved management spares and timely rehabilitation of equipments.

(v) Increase in production and productivity with special emphasis on underground mines.

(vi) A number of systems improvements and managerial measures have been adopted to improve efficiency of operations.

Closure of coal mines suffering losses

450. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the Nav Bharat Times (Patna edition) dated 24th January, 1992 captioned as "Ghate Wali 251 khadane band karne per vichar"; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present there is no proposal for large scale closure of loss making mines.

Adverse effect of increase in price of Coal

451. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of coal have been increased in the month of December, 1991;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some State Electricity Boards have shut down their power stations due to the increased prices of coal ;

(c) whether Government are aware that this would have adverse effects on all the commodities; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken, so far, in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Ministry of Coal is not aware if any such incident.